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BOSTON'S WORKABLE PROGRAM FOR COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT

A STATEMENT OF PROGRESS AND GOALS

OCT 1 1964

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On September 22, 1960 Mayor Collins announced a proposed \$90 million dollar development program for the City of Boston. The program was endorsed by the City Council, the Redevelopment Authority, and by civic and neighborhood organizations. Since that time it has served as the basic policy statement of Boston's program for community improvement.

Consideration by the City Council of the City's application for recertification of the Workable Program for Community Improvement makes this an appropriate time to summarize significant achievements in the past year, to indicate changes in the community's over-all objectives and to point out major goals for the coming year.

In the past year, as in the preceding years, Boston has received extensive and continued support from the Housing and Home Finance Agency and its constituent agencies, the Urban Renewal Administration, the Federal Housing Administration and the Public Housing Administration.

In 1964 President Johnson, following the lead of the late President John F. Kennedy, has actively supported programs for urban renewal and housing. The President's leadership and support has resulted in the adoption of the Housing Act of 1964 which provides the Housing Administrator, Robert C. Weaver, with additional tools



and resources with which to assist communities to undertake adequate programs of urban renewal and housing.

Rehabilitation continues to be the key to the Boston Renewal Program. Substantial progress has been made in the rehabilitation of residential properties. And with the adoption of the Housing Act of 1964 still further advances have been made which will liberalize Federal mortgage insurance programs and provide for a direct loan program for rehabilitation at below market interest rates. In addition, the Boston Banks Urban Renewal Group has provided funds for the rehabilitation of properties in renewal areas thus meeting their commitment to Mayor Collins.

General Neighborhood Renewal Planning continues to serve as a useful framework for renewal project planning. It is expected that current General Neighborhood Renewal Planning will be supplemented with additional project planning within the next year. It is also anticipated that in the next year GNRP and Project Planning will be augmented with Community Renewal Planning (CRP).

A more detailed account of the accomplishments of the past year and the expectations for the year ahead are given on an area or project basis.

#### DOWNTOWN NORTH

##### Government Center

Progress in the Government Center project has been without precedent. Under the procedures of early land acquisition and early land disposition, it has been possible to acquire property, relocate



families and businesses, clear the site and sell land for the development of both public and private buildings.

The Urban Renewal Plan for the Government Center Project was approved by the City Council May 25, 1964 and on July 23, 1964 the Housing and Home Finance Agency executed a Loan and Grant Contract providing for a temporary loan of \$37,391,731, a Capital Grant of \$25,474,731 and a Relocation Grant of \$2,332,000. to carry out the project.

In the past year the relocation of the subway has been substantially completed and the new Government Center Station and kiosk have been placed in use. Construction of the new \$20 million John F. Kennedy Federal Office Building has dramatically changed the skyline and construction of the new \$25 million City Hall and a new private \$20 million dollar office building has commenced.

The year ahead will see the start of additional new construction and rehabilitation including the new \$35 million State Service Center, the \$1.2 million police station, the rehabilitation of the historic Sears Crescent, and a 2000 car parking garage. A competition for the development of a 30 to 40 story private office building is underway and the selection of a developer will be made by the end of the year.

An essential element in the progress and success of the Government Center has been the close cooperation which has been maintained between both State and City Government Center Commissions, the Traffic Department, and the State and City Departments of Public Works.





### Waterfront Area

Within the past year planning for the Waterfront area was completed under the direction of the Downtown Waterfront Corporation. The proposed renewal plan was presented at a public hearing in Faneuil Hall on 4/15/64. The plan was approved by the City Council on June 11, 1964 and the execution of a contract with the HHFA for a temporary loan of \$20,635,200 and a Capital Grant of \$15,360,200 was authorized by the BRA.

The United States Department of Agriculture undertook and completed an intensive study of markets located in the Waterfront area, including those surrounding the Quincy Market.

The study revealed that the market operators could effect savings of approximately \$5 million a year if they operated in facilities designed specifically to meet the demands of modern distribution instead of in the inefficient and obsolete facilities they presently occupied. The Downtown Waterfront Corporation and the BRA have been negotiating for possible specific sites on which to locate new market facilities.

The New England Telephone Company has stated its interest in erecting an \$18 million office building along Atlantic Avenue to augment its office space in downtown Boston and an architectural firm has started work on designing the structure. The New England Aquarium Corporation has employed architectural consultants to develop plans for a \$3 million aquarium in the area and has submitted a letter of intent to the BRA. Private developers have expressed



strong interest for carrying out extensive rehabilitation of existing structures, for the construction of a new fish pier, multi-family housing and an office building on the wharves.

In concert with the Department of Public Works, plans have been firmed up to improve circulation among the Central Artery, the Tunnels and the Streets serving as connecting links to the North End, Waterfront and Government Center areas.

#### DOWNTOWN BOSTON

##### Central Business District

Extensive planning studies and economic analyses of the Central Business District have been proceeding and will be completed next year. Planning and economic consultants are working in concert with BRA staff and the Committee on the Central Business District in developing a plan and program which will meet the anticipated needs of Downtown Boston.

The planning for this most important segment of downtown Boston is being coordinated with plans for the Government Center, Waterfront, South Station, South Cove and Back Bay areas.

##### South Cove

Until the approval of the Act of 1964 in September of this year, the HHFA had not had sufficient funds to earmark the Federal contribution necessary to execute the South Cove project. It is anticipated that funds will be earmarked shortly and that planning activity may be undertaken in the next several months and that the project will be in execution within a year.



The South Cove area embraces the Chinese community, Tufts-New England Medical Center and Don Bosco School. BRA staff have been working with the Chinese Benevolent Association, the planning staff of the medical school, the Bay Village Association and representatives of Don Bosco School and Morgan Memorial to resolve their separate needs.

#### Back Bay

General Neighborhood Renewal Plan studies for the Back Bay have been substantially completed. On the basis of these studies it is believed that no federally-aided action will be required to renew and rehabilitate the area. The Back Bay Association has employed the services of a planning consultant to provide guidance to the Back Bay business, institutional and residential interests.

These interests are considering the formation of two successor groups to carry on planning and development activities in the area with assistance from the BRA.

#### RESIDENTIAL RENEWAL AREAS

A major element of the Boston Program continues to be the renewal of seven predominantly residential neighborhoods which have been suffering from blighting influences. These neighborhoods are Roxbury-No.Dorchester, South End, Charlestown, Parker Hill-Fenway, So. Boston, East Boston and Jamaica Plain.

These neighborhoods, different in appearance, nature and character, share the common problem of worn out housing and shops and obsolete schools and other public facilities. They have inherent values which must be revitalized to protect the communities' investment and to once again provide desirable and convenient neighborhoods which will attract families back to the central city.



The major element for each neighborhood plan continues to be residential rehabilitation. Rehabilitation standards have been established which meet both local and federal requirements. The FHA and the Boston Banks Urban Renewal Group, an association of mortgage lenders who have pooled funds for the purpose of encouraging and enabling rehabilitation are cooperating with BRA rehabilitation staffs in renewal areas in providing and underwriting loans for residential rehabilitation. With the adoption of the Housing Act of 1964, a direct loan program providing funds at 3% interest will be available.

#### Schools

The School Committee has initiated a program for the construction of new facilities in renewal areas using the findings of the report prepared by the Harvard Graduate School of Education as a guide.

#### Relocation

The relocation of families displaced by government action into decent, safe, and sanitary dwellings within the capacity of the family is fundamental to the success of a renewal program. The BRA has developed a program for relocation which more than meets statutory requirements and Federal regulations.

The BRA contracted with the United South End Settlements to undertake the relocation of families displaced from the Castle Square area. An outstanding job of relocating these families was





accomplished. In the Washington Park area, the BRA relocation staff has been relocating displaced families with equal success.

Every effort is made by the BRA not only to solve the family's housing problem but to ameliorate social and family problems by referral to appropriate agencies for assistance.

The Action for Boston Community Development organization has been active in establishing multi-service centers in renewal areas. These centers provide a wide variety of services to disadvantaged individuals and families. These services are aimed at the social renewal and rehabilitation necessary to supplement the renewal of the physical plant. The services provided by the ABCD also have aided in ameliorating the problems of families being relocated in renewal areas.

#### New Housing

New moderate income rental housing is being developed under the below-market interest rate program of the FHA. Already church groups and a labor union as sponsors have teamed up with developers to construct dwelling units on a non-profit basis. The BRA anticipates extensive construction of housing under this program as additional land becomes available within renewal project areas.

#### Parks, Playgrounds, Streets, Utilities

The development of parks and playgrounds and other public facilities is being programmed for each of the older neighborhoods. These facilities, designed to meet modern standards, will enhance the desirability of these areas as places to live.



Many of the streets and utilities are worn out and otherwise inadequate to serve the demands placed upon them. Programs for these improvements are currently being developed and executed in Government Center and in Washington Park. Such programs for the improvement or replacement of these facilities will be an integral part of the development plan for each neighborhood.

#### Planning with People

The heart of the renewal process in Boston continues to be planning with people. The BRA staff and neighborhood groups work together developing confidence and respect because both know that large scale urban renewal of neighborhoods should not and indeed cannot proceed effectively without active neighborhood support.

Considerable progress has been made in individual project areas as the following summaries indicate.

#### Washington Park

Renewal activity in the Washington Park area commenced in April, 1963 with the execution of a loan and grant contract with the HHFA. Since that time substantial progress has been made in the renewal of this area. Relocation and rehabilitation activities have taken place from site offices in the project area.

In the year 1963 - 1964 alone, BRA technical staff have provided guidance and assistance to 558 property owners. As a result over 300 dwelling units have been rehabilitated. Residents in the area have applied for nearly \$2 million in mortgages. The Boston Banks Urban Renewal Group and the FHA have participated in most of these undertakings. It is anticipated that rehabilitation



activity will be accelerated in the coming year through improvement of administrative techniques and the initiation of a direct loan program as authorized by the Housing Act of 1964 signed by President Johnson on September 2, 1964. Under the sponsorship of a private non-profit corporation formed by the membership of the St. Mark Church in Roxbury, 32 units of 221 (d) (3) relocation housing were completed and occupied in the past year.

Ninety-two units of similar housing, being developed under the sponsorship of a corporation of the Charles Street AME Church, are nearing completion and some units are already occupied.

Construction activity has resumed on the 202 unit Academy Homes development sponsored by BUSE Boston, Inc. and completion is scheduled within the next year.

A second mortgage commitment has been issued by the FHA to the St. Mark Church group for the construction of 84 additional units of 221 (d) (3) relocation housing. In addition the Charlesbank Homes, Inc. has authorized a developer and architect to prepare preliminary plans and a development program for construction of approximately 200 units of 221 (d) (3) relocation housing on a site on Warren Street.



The sponsors and developers of the 221 (d) (3) relocation housing have agreed to lease 10% of the largest dwelling units in each development to clients of the Boston Housing Authority under a rent supplementation plan whereby the Housing Authority pays the difference between what the family can afford to pay and the economic rent for the dwelling unit.

Construction has been completed on a neighborhood playground on Walnut Street for small children. Several temporary playgrounds for intermediate age groups have been constructed to be replaced with permanent facilities as renewal of the entire project area advances.

Construction has commenced on a new YMCA to serve the community. It is anticipated that in the ensuing year a new shopping center, civic center, one school and 200 additional units of relocation housing will be placed under construction.

### Charlestown

Renewal planning for the Charlestown area has been completed during the past year. The relocation of the elevated railway through Charlestown is the key to the revitalization of this community.





On June 19, 1964, the Massachusetts Board of Regional Community Colleges voted to locate the Massachusetts Bay Community College in Charlestown adding further incentive to the need for early renewal action in this vital residential community.

During the past year nearly 200 homes have been voluntarily rehabilitated by property owners in Charlestown, many of whom have utilized the technical services provided by the BRA through its Home Improvement Center which was established in Charlestown within the past year.

#### South End

Planning for the renewal of the complex South End area has been completed and the plan is being presented to the neighborhood. In anticipation of renewal action many property owners in the area have voluntarily rehabilitated their properties. In addition the BRA provides technical services to property owners from a site office within the area.

Under early land acquisition procedures the BRA has acquired and cleared the Castle Square area in the South End. By the spring of 1965 it is expected that 500 units of 221 (d) (3) relocation housing and 92 units of public housing for elderly persons will be under construction.



Some commercial and light industrial facilities also will be built in the Castle Square area.

Parker Hill-Fenway

General Neighborhood Renewal Plan activities are nearly completed for this area. Within the next year it is proposed that a Federally-aided project be initiated in the Fenway area lying generally north of Huntington Avenue, west of Massachusetts Avenue, an area which contains numerous medical, educational and cultural institutions. In designing a plan for this area great effort has been taken to protect the interests of the City as a whole and the interests of the institutions, residents and commercial enterprises.

In the past year the 277 unit Charlesbank Apartments in the non-federally assisted Whitney Street Project were completed and occupied and construction of an additional 114 units was begun.

South Boston, East Boston and Jamaica Plain

General Neighborhood Renewal Plan activity is substantially completed for these areas and is being coordinated with the work of the General Plan.

OPPORTUNITY PROJECTS

North Harvard

A Loan and Grant Contract for the North Harvard Project was executed July 29, 1964. The contract provides for a temporary loan of \$596,387 and a capital grant of \$236,387. Land acquisition, relocation and site clearance activities will be undertaken in the next year. The developer will construct 280 dwelling units financed



under FHA Section 220. Construction is scheduled for 1965.

Allston-Waverly

Allston-Waverly Apartments, Inc., a corporation organized under Chapter 121-A has filed an application with the Federal Housing Administration for a mortgage commitment to develop approximately 100 units of 221 (d) (3) housing. Construction is anticipated to start in the spring of 1965.

Jamaicaway

Jamaicaway Development Company, Inc., a corporation organized under Chapter 121-A, is constructing a high-rise tower containing 265 units and 14 three-bedroom town houses on a site in Jamaicaaway. The development is being financed under FHA Section 220.

Tremont-Mason

First Realty Company of Boston utilizing financing under FHA Section 220 will construct a 26-story apartment building on Tremont Street opposite the Public Gardens. The building will contain 378 apartments, shops at street level and an integral parking garage. The site has been cleared and construction of the new building is under way.



FINANCING THE PROGRAM

The following table indicates the currently estimated capital grant requirements of the Boston Renewal Program as of July 1, 1964.

Federal Capital Grant Requirements

July 1, 1964

<u>Project Completed</u>	<u>Capital Grant</u>
New York Streets	\$ 3,184,800
<u>Projects in Execution</u>	
West End	10,945,938
Government Center	27,541,100
Washington Park	16,334,612
Waterfront	16,485,200
North Harvard	227,387
<u>Projects in Survey and Planning</u>	
Charlestown (1)	28,561,077
South End (2)	25,000,000
Central Business District	18,410,880
South Cove	8,916,101
<u>Projects in General Neighborhood Renewal Planning</u>	
Parker Hill-Fenway	2,642,000
South Boston	4,482,200
East Boston	3,690,000
Back Bay	558,653
Jamaica Plain	3,410,000
Mattapan	631,885
TOTAL -	<u>\$171,021,833</u>

- (1) Urban Renewal Administration review of Final Plan under way.
- (2) Estimate based on draft of Final Plan.





The Federal Capital Grant requirements of \$171,021,833 will provide for two-thirds of the net cost of undertaking these projects plus the full cost of relocation payments. One-third of the net cost of the projects, exclusive of relocation payments, totaling \$85,530,967, must come primarily from one of three local sources:

1. City contributions in the form of cash from general funds or bond proceeds used to defray the cost of such community facilities as schools, streets, sewers, etc., to the extent these serve and support the project area. All or nearly all of Boston's contributions will be in the form of long-needed schools and other community facilities programmed in the Capital Improvements Program for Boston.
2. State financial aid for urban renewal.
3. Credits for land purchases made by institutions in renewal areas.

#### Capital Improvements Program

The BRA staff, in cooperation with the various City departments concerned has prepared a Capital Improvements Program for the twelve year period 1963 - 1975. It is Boston's first Capital Improvements Program which integrates urban renewal requirements with established requests of City departments. By this integration the City will be able to stretch its capital improvements dollars farthest and reduce the overall cost of renewing the City substantially.



### Public Housing

During the past year the Redevelopment Authority has worked closely with the Boston Housing Authority on the selection of housing for rehabilitation, the selection of sites and planning for new housing for elderly persons and in developing improved operating procedures for the housing of families displaced by governmental action.

### Code Enforcement

The Office of Neighborhood Improvement has been engaged in a code enforcement project in the North Dorchester Area. In the next year the ONI will extend its program into additional areas scheduled for improvement.

### Comprehensive Community Planning

The General Plan for the City of Boston is being completed and will be presented to the BRA this fall, and when approved, will replace the 1950 General Plan. The General Neighborhood Renewal Plans have served as the basis for the Master Plan and have provided much of the specific knowledge about the City on which to build a Plan that will be a useful working document for renewal as well as planning purposes. The Plan itself places special emphasis on requirements for transportation, schools, housing and supporting facilities.

### Summary and Conclusion

In the period since the last report, major accomplishments have been achieved. Boston continues to stand in favorable comparison with any renewal program in the United States. His Honor, Mayor John F. Collins, the Redevelopment Authority and the City Council have continued to provide the strong leadership for the program without which it could not go forward.

